

LEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION 2006 GIRLS FASTPITCH SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES AGES 8-15

I. LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

- A.** The goal and objective of the league shall be to provide enjoyment and instruction on the game of softball in a safe environment, while encouraging good sportsmanship.
- B.** All matters concerning the league or rule interpretation shall be administered by the department.
- C.** All volunteer coaches shall be selected by the Parks and Recreation Department.
- D.** All coaches shall attend each practice or have his/her assistant attend in his/her place. Players **will not** be allowed to practice without adult supervision.
- E.** All practices will be scheduled through the Parks and Recreation Department. Pre-season practices will be two a week (one weekday and one weekend practice). After the season begins, the weekday practice will be eliminated.
- F.** No player shall be dropped from a team without the approval of the Parks and Recreation Department. Coaches shall report to the Athletics Division any inactive players on their rosters.
- G.** Lee County Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to change or amend any of these rules if it is deemed necessary for the benefit of the program.
- H.** Lee County Parks and Recreation will provide an official scorekeeper for games.
- I.** There will be a 10:00 pm curfew on all games.
- J.** League participants must be eligible age as of May 1, 2006. Lee County Parks and Recreation Department will handle any exceptions.
- K.** The use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs in any form by players or adult coaches in the dugout, on the benches or on the playing field is **not** permitted.

L. There will be *no unsportsmanlike conduct* or **profane language** allowed on the field or in the dugout. (Penalty: Ejection from the field and/or forfeiture of the game.) **If a coach or player is ejected from the field then he or she will have to sit out the next two games.**

M. Coaches should meet at home plate to discuss any questions they have concerning the rules so that there will not be a problem later.

N. **Please eliminate negative chants. Encourage your team to use positive chants.**

O. Only jerseys issued by the Lee County Parks and Recreation Department will be worn during County-sponsored games. No restriction on softball hats, pants, or socks. Participants may keep jersey at the end of the season.

II. SAFETY

The safety of the participants is the primary concern of the Parks and Recreation Department. All individuals in the program must abide by all safety rules.

A. All players must wear athletic type shoes. **No metal cleats are allowed.**

B. All catchers must wear a facemask, chest protector, helmet, shin guards, and throat protector during the game. All batters and base runners must wear helmets during the game. Any underage person coaching bases must wear a batter's helmet.

C. All players must at all times remain in the dugout except when at bat or going to the field. Only players and coaches are allowed in the dugout.

D. The team's equipment should be continually checked to make certain that it is in good condition. Any equipment in poor condition should be replaced immediately.

E. All players and spectators are prohibited from sitting on the fence.

F. Jewelry and hair barrettes must be **removed** before the game begins. Only rubber or cloth (elastic) bands may be used to control hair. **No plastic beads.**

III. PLAYING RULES

The 2006 Amateur Softball Association of America rulebook shall apply with the following exceptions and explanations:

A. Length of Game

Ponytail (8-10) League

A regulation game shall consist of six (6) innings or one hour and thirty minutes of play, whichever comes first. **No** new inning will begin after the one hour and thirty minute time limit has expired. Any inning started before the one hour and thirty minute time limit must be completed. Umpire discretion will enforce the starting of a new inning. Umpire will call for last inning.

Minor (11-12) League

A regulation game shall consist of six (6) innings or one hour and thirty minutes of play, whichever comes first. **No** new inning will begin after the one hour and thirty minute time limit has expired. Any inning started before the one hour and thirty minute time limit must be completed. Umpire discretion will enforce the starting of a new inning. Umpire will call for last inning.

Junior (13-15) League

A regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings or one hour and thirty minutes of play, whichever comes first. **No** new inning will begin after the one hour and thirty minute time limit has expired. Any inning started before the one hour and thirty minute time limit must be completed. Umpire discretion will enforce the starting of a new inning. Umpire will call for last inning.

B. Extra innings will be played to determine the winner if time permits.

C. In the **Ponytail (8-10)** and **Minor (11-12)** Leagues, the 10-run rule is in effect after **3 ½** innings if the home team is leading or **4** innings if the visiting team is leading. In the **Junior (13-15)** League, the 10-run rule is in effect after **4 ½** innings if the home team is leading or **5** innings if the visiting team is leading.

D. A team must field eight (8) players to start the game for Minors, Juniors and Ponytail. If a player shows up after the game begins that player will be put at the bottom of the continuous batting order.

E. A ten (10) minute grace period will be allowed for **only** the first game of the evening, before a forfeit is declared. **Game time is forfeit time** for subsequent games.

F. All eligible players at the game shall bat in a continuous batting order for the entire game. A player does not have to play in the field to bat. If a player leaves the game **for any reason**, the team will be penalized with an out during that player's turn at bat.

G. All eligible players at the game must play defense for two innings. **Every player must have participated on defense by the third (3rd) inning.**

H. If a player is kept out of the game due to injury or discipline reasons, the coach **must report** this to the umpire, the opponent's head coach, and the scorekeeper *before* the game begins. Discipline action may be to sit the player out of the game entirely or have the player in the field two innings while keeping her in the batting order.

I. Substitutions can only be made at the 1/2 innings unless an injury occurs. Players can be moved around in the field at anytime during innings, including the pitcher. There will be free substitution throughout the game except for the pitchers, which may retake the mound one time after being taken out of the game.

J. Sliding is legal in all leagues, but **NO head first sliding** in any league.

K. Runners cannot steal until a legally pitched ball has **left the pitchers hand** in the Juniors. Runners cannot steal until a legally pitched ball has **hit the catchers mitt** in the Minors and Ponytail.

L. Four (4) balls will determine a walk and three (3) strikes will determine an out. Unlimited number of fouls will be allowed on the last strike.

Ponytail (8-10 Girls) League Only – Modified Pitching Rules:

Player's for each team will pitch until there is three (3) balls on the batter, once there is three balls on the batter, the coach of the offensive team will come out and pitch to his/her own player, if the count is 3 balls and 0 strikes, the player will get a maximum of 3 pitches. If the count is 3 balls and 1 strike, the player will get 2 pitches. If the count is 3 balls and 2 strikes, the player will get 1 pitch. If on the last pitch, the ball is fouled, the batter will get another pitch. There will not be a limit on the number of foul balls on the last pitch. If on the full count, the Head Coach throws a pitch that is determined to be a ball by the umpire, and the batter does *not* swing, the batter will receive another pitch. **THIS IS ONLY ON THE FULL COUNT.** Should the batter swing at the ball, it will be considered a strike. Head coach may appoint another adult to pitch to his/her own team.

The coach that is serving as pitcher will not be a defensive player. There will be an opposing defensive player allowed within the pitching circle. The defensive player may not leave the pitching circle before the ball is batted. **Penalty:** The batter will be awarded a base hit.

M. Slinging the bat is prohibited. The first time the official will give a warning to each team. The second and subsequent times, the batter will be called "out". A player will be disqualified for intentionally or flagrantly slinging a bat. This is a judgment call and will be handled by the umpire.

N. Any runner, whether a batter-runner or a base runner, is out immediately when deliberately removing her head protector (helmet) during playing action (live ball). Such removal of the head protector by the batter-runner or any other base runner will not cause playing action to stop on any other play necessary to get an out unless the action which resulted in the deliberate removal of the head protector resulted in the third out. Failure to wear helmet when ordered to do so by the umpire will result in a disqualification of the player. This is a judgment call and will be handled by the umpire.

O. Bunting is legal in Juniors & Minors. (**Results:** A batter will be called out if she bunts foul with two strikes.) Bunting is illegal in Ponytail 8-10.

P. Third Strike Rule

A Batter becomes a Batter-Runner when the catcher fails to catch the third strike before it hits the ground when there are fewer than two outs and first base is unoccupied, or anytime there are two outs. This is called the third strike rule.

(**Exception:** Ponytail 8-10 cannot run on dropped third strike.)

Q. No appeal play will be allowed. The umpires will make the call automatically.

R. The infield fly rule is in effect.

(**PONYTAIL (8-10) LEAGUE ONLY:** There will be **no** in-field fly rule)

S. Mandatory: runner for catcher with two outs. Runner will be the person who made the last out. **Optional:** runner for pitcher with two outs. Runner will be the person who made the last out.

T. An eleven (11) inch ball will be used for the Ponytail league. A twelve (12) inch ball will be used for the Junior and Minor leagues.

U. Judgement calls can not be protested

V. In case teams finish with identical records, head to head contests during the regular season will determine the higher seed. If the teams are still tied, difference of record verse the highest seeds will determine which team receives the higher seed. If there is still no difference, a coin toss will determine the higher seed.

W. Hash marks will be placed in between the bases in the Ponytail league. If a runner has advanced past the hash mark when time is called then she can advance to the next base. If she has not advanced past the hash mark then she has to return to the previous base.

Suspended Game: If weather interferes with play so that a game cannot be completed, the game will be continued at a later date with the lineup and batting order the same and all situations identical to the moment of suspension. This decision will be made by the field supervisor and umpire.

Rain Delay: If there is a delay in a game due to weather, coaches are to advise players not to leave the park until the game has been officially suspended. (Usually, a wait of 15 minutes to see if weather conditions improve.)

In case a game is suspended in progress, four (4) complete innings, (3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead), will constitute a regulation game.

Inclement Weather: A decision will be made concerning cancelled games by 3:00 pm. Please call the Parks and Recreation Information Hot-Line at **774-7999** after 3:00 pm. **Please inform your players and their parents of this number. Do not have them call the office,** office personnel need the lines to be clear.

IV. PLAYING FIELD

A. Ponytail League

Pitching Distance - 35 feet

Base Path - 60 feet

Softball - 11" will be used

B. Minor League

Pitching Distance - 40 feet

Base Path - 60 feet

Softball - 12" will be used

C. Junior League

Pitching Distance - 40 feet

Base Path - 60 feet

Softball - 12" will be used